

THE PRICKED EAR

Vol. II, No. 4

The Gryphon Society

24 February 1958

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ANNOUNCEMENTS: On Tuesday, the 25th, at 6:30, the Gryphons will be hosts to Dr. Arnold Nash at dinner in the North Dining Room of the University Center. Later in the evening he will conduct a discussion group in Richards House freshman lounge. Those wishing to be present at dinner please let Walt Grabowsky know immediately, so that you may be counted in for the reserved tables.

Friday at four PM, Executive Board meeting with Mr. Campbell.

Messrs. Fozard and Troy, have worked out a plan approved by Mr. Campbell by which present counselors will help evaluate new applicants for the program on the basis of both counseling and Gryphonic qualities. The plan involves three three-man groups which will each interview about fifteen freshman. The men chosen to participate in this program are Michael Danks, Paul Ringenbach, Howard Troy, Silas Morse, Beall Fowler, Walt Grabowsky, Dave Blanchard, Dave Wismer, Charles Culver. There will be an informational meeting for these men on Wednesday, Feb. 26, at 5:15 PM, in Coppee one.

THE LAST GRYPHON meeting resulted, as those who were present well know, in a considerable controversy over whether or not the Gryphons, as such, should evaluate applicants for counseling position; that is, as to their potential as Gryphons. The arguments employed in that meeting ranged far afield in some instances, of the immediate question before the Society. This suggested to your editors that perhaps now was the time to open up the whole problem of Gryphon Society coupled with Counseling Program. It is essentially a problem in definition, and is probably the knottiest we shall have to face, this, or any other year. It goes right to the heart of our very existence as an organization, either of Gryphons or of Freshman Counselors. Stated as economically as possible, the question which we consider in this issue of the Pricked Ear is, "What is , and/or what should be, the relationship of the Gryphon Society to the Freshman Counseling Program?" We have allowed our contributors complete freedom, both as to their interpretation of the question, and as to their treatment of it. There has been no editing; the articles are printed exactly as they were submitted to us. Our only provision was that each contribution be signed by its author. Our hope is that out of these widely varying opinions and, in some cases, recommendations, will come a better Gryphon Society and a better Counseling Program. We are sure that the very least effect will be a clarification of our organization's purposes, and a consequent diminution of confusion regarding what we should or should not do.

This author was asked simply to express an opinion of the Gryphon Society, due to a less intimate contact with it.

"Lehigh University is constantly trying to improve itself -- student-wise, study-wise, community-wise. Therefore the establishment of the Gryphon Society, made up of the counselors and Housefellows, seems the best place to start to improve and/or guide the freshman. The announcement of their academic standing in the fall semester indicates that those chosen have belief in their purpose and have tried to set the good example -- and have been successful. We shall look forward to their continued leadership."

Mrs. Dorothy Moravec

"I have not given long-time thought to the matter you have proposed for discussion and thus my comments will be more on the casual side. As I understand the present organization and its relation to the counseling program, the Gryphon Society is a vehicle for social contact among those who are in the program. Please define social in a broad sense and not merely partying. This is in effect an "after-office" organization, or perhaps it (Gryphon) might be called a family -- a family that happens to work at the same factory and therefore has a common work interest. But the Gryphon Society is the family at home -- not at work -- living together, playing together, and bound to each other by a special family tie. Naturally work interests will be discussed for the work they have in common is an additional tie. The counseling program becomes then a family organization. The counselors are the family at work -- the family at home. Work decisions may not be made at home, but many of the decisions will certainly be born in the family atmosphere.

"The Gryphons should work toward social development (again in a broad sense) on all fronts; should contribute to the improvement of the counseling program;

... set a high tone of campus living, personal development, cultural development, and intellectual development.

If the Gryphons and the counseling program become one and the same many corners could be cut, and efficiency would result. However, I feel that something would be lost inasmuch as family problems might interfere with work programs, and "factory" problems might damage family life."

Clarence B. Campbell

"The Gryphon Society is unique among Lehigh organizations.

"In a purely formal sense, it is defined by the constitution and the by-laws which the group adopted and which the University, acting through the Committee on Student Organizations, then approved.

"In a negative way, it is defined by several observations. It is not like any other campus "living group" although it is classified as such for the scholarship ranking (in which, like Abou Ben Adam, its 'name leads all the rest'). It is not self-perpetuating, like other student organizations, because its members are, first of all, employees of the University on the basis of selection procedures comparable to those used in staffing other academic and administrative units. Its members do not all live under one roof, nor even within groaning distance of one another; in the nature of things, there will probably never be a Gryphon house.

"But there exists a less precise but more meaningful definition in the recognition of an affirmative community of interests, shared by all in varying degree. The basis of selection tends to bring together a group of men, all of above average intelligence and effectiveness as human beings, who, however unlike they may be in their unstereotyped individual characteristics, have a common general interest in 'people' and a semi-professional interest, at least, in the educational and general welfare of freshmen. At the same time their employment as counselors tends to isolate them from non-freshman human relationships, and it is no surprise to find them joining, at a level beyond that of the freshmen, for social purposes. The Gryphon Society, consequently, in undefined and probably undefinable proportions, is a living group, a course society, an extra-curricular activity, and a social club, as well as a specialist group among University employees. It seems impossible (and as far as I can see unnecessary) analytically to separate these roles.

Turning from analysis to synthesis, I view the Gryphon Society, as defined in its constitution or otherwise, whether negatively or positively, a whole which is very much greater than the mere sum of its parts. My feeling for the great potential which exists for the Gryphons as the guardians of the University's "golden treasure" is such that if the entire body of undergraduate organizations had to be reduced to two, my only problem would be to name the other group."

J. D. Leith

This author entitles his remarks "What is a Good Gryphon?"

"I think the question is a crucial one for the counselors and the Gryphon Society. At the first executive board meeting for this semester I remarked, though somewhat facetiously at the time, 'A good Gryphon is a good counselor.' I now say it seriously, and I think it makes sense (I do not think it necessary to elaborate on what qualities make a good counselor here. These are not and needn't necessarily be determined by the Gryphon Society.) But I have never thought that a man should be considered for membership in the Gryphon Society unless he did have the qualities necessary for election to the counseling program. This is only natural since the Society is an offspring of the program.

"But there is more to it than that. Once the Gryphon Society became a fact, it added a whole new aspect to the counseling program, that of group identification. This identification cannot be denied. Nor can it, I think, be ignored. The group as a whole benefits, or does not, from the judgments formed of its members. It has a right then, it seems to me, to make certain demands of them.

The first of these is a desire to belong. This was not, of course, something which could be expected when the Gryphon Society was first formed, due to the nature of its formation. I think it can and should be expected of every prospective member from now on.

"The next is to perpetuate itself in such a way that its existence will strengthen both the counseling program and the Gryphon Society itself. To do this the Society must have the confidence and support of its individual members. Even though there may be a difference of opinion between a particular man and the group as a whole, the group should reasonably expect his support.

"The third most important requisite for membership is active participation. This, however, though highly desirable in all phases is not an absolute necessity so long as inactivity in the Society's programs does not become anti-activity.

"The Gryphon Society has already made substantial contributions to the counseling program. These might well have never been made otherwise. It is not a mere purposeless appendage to the program. If it is to become so, I see no justification for its existence."

Walter T. Grubowsky

"The Gryphon Society is a much-needed social appendage to the counseling program and its object should be to serve in this capacity. In the counseling program, where members are chosen for maturity and common sense, it is difficult to conceive of a situation where an alignment of loyalty would be necessary with a social organization on one side of the fence and a service group on the other side.

"The counselor should be well-rounded and the Gryphon Society is a means to this end. A "good counselor" is a "good Gryphon" and a "good Gryphon" has attributes that will help him to become a "good counselor."

Donald M. Wood

"The Gryphon Society and counseling program should not be separate entities. The Society should be an organization responsible for the administration, operation and welfare of the counseling program under the direct supervision of the University.

"This responsibility would include (not necessarily in order of importance):

1. Provision for the intellectual and moral development of the freshman as directly to the residence halls (good citizenship, study habits, etc.).
2. Administration of the freshman residence halls (discipline, etc.).
3. Participation in the selection, training and placement of the counselors and assistant counselors.

4. Provision for a social and intellectual program for all Gryphons.

"This responsibility would not include the provision for the social development of the freshman (this should be a function of other organizations such as Cyanoide, sophomore class, etc.).

"The merging of the present counseling program and the Gryphon Society would:

1. Eliminate the present problem of trying to decide which function belongs to which organization.
2. Eliminate the decision of who is and who is not a good Gryphon on the basis of social participation in the Society.
3. Bring unity of purpose to both the program and the Society."

Ernest Schickedanz

Now that you have, supposedly, read and digested these manifestos, what do you think? We earnestly hope that you will turn your thoughts to the question during the next four or five days, and we solicit, just as earnestly, the written fruits of your mental labors. Those letters which most accurately support the representative points of view will be published in next week's issue. Can you afford not to give it some thought?



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